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Letter dated 18 January 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am attaching herewith a press statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on 18 January 2012, regarding the terrorist attack, on Monday, 16 January 2012, targeting a group of 22 tourists who were travelling in the Afar Regional State of Ethiopia (see annex). No doubt, this atrocious attack was planned, directed and executed with the direct involvement of the Eritrean regime. This is an illustration of the flagrant manner in which the Eritrean regime continues to act in contravention of international law governing inter-State relations and successive United Nations Security Council resolutions, including 1907 (2009) and 2023 (2011).

In this regard, I have the honour to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Tekeda **Alemu**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 January 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Press statement on Eritrean-backed tourist killings in Afar Regional State

On Monday, 16 January 2012, a group of 22 tourists travelling in Afar Regional State were attacked by gunmen. It was an act of open terrorism resulting in the death of five people, with others injured and kidnapped. Those killed were two Germans, two Hungarians and an Austrian. The injured included an Italian, a Hungarian and two Germans. Three Ethiopians were also kidnapped.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia would like to express its deep condolences to the families of those killed in this cruel attack.

The Government will do everything possible to have those taken prisoner released as soon as possible. It is already clear that the attack was carried out with the direct involvement of the Eritrean Government. There is concern that the people who have been kidnapped might have been taken across the border into Eritrea.

On previous occasions, when tourists were kidnapped, the Eritrean Government tried to use the prisoners as a bargaining chip in its diplomatic activities.

Monday's incident is yet another indication of how determined the regime in Asmara is to continue its destabilizing activities in the region. Indeed, this is an indication of the failure of the international community to rein in the regime.

The Government of Ethiopia believes that this terrorist act is intended to coincide with the upcoming African Union summit being held in Addis Ababa at the end of the month. It might be recalled that it was almost exactly a year ago that a major bombing plot was foiled in Addis Ababa, intended to disrupt the African Union summit last January.

It is an open secret that the regime in Asmara focuses its "diplomatic" efforts on trying to intimidate and terrorize the international community, rather than operate through normal diplomatic norms. It is also becoming obvious that the international community's failure to take serious action against the regime is effectively reinforcing Eritrea's recalcitrant behaviour.

The Government of Ethiopia is of the view that the time is overdue for the international community to become serious about the destabilizing role of the Eritrean regime in the region. This latest cowardly attack against innocent tourists clearly shows Asmara's contempt for the notion of international law and customs.

The Ethiopian Government's tolerance towards a regime that openly supports terrorist activity is inevitably wearing thinner by the day. The Government cannot and should not sit idly by while the regime in Asmara continues to sponsor acts of terror within Ethiopia's territory with impunity.

It will be obliged to take whatever action is necessary to stop the activities of the Eritrean regime once and for all unless the international community assumes its responsibilities and takes the necessary steps to bring this abominable behaviour to

an end. The Ethiopian Government believes that it is still not too late for international action.

At the same time, the Government would like to reiterate that the international community has never been the last line of defence against Eritrea's destabilizing activities. It should be made clear that Ethiopia has the right to defend itself and it will do so if necessary.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

18 January 2012